# City of Bellevue

# MEMORANDUM

Date:      December 9, 2013

To:        Mayor Lee and City Councilmembers

From:      Myrna Basich, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk

Subject:   Determining Procedure for Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor at Council's
           January 6 meeting

As you may recall, State law and Resolution No. 5987 provide that the Council shall elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor to serve terms of two years at the first official meeting of the City Council during even-numbered years. The elections of these officials will be the first order of business at the Study Session on January 6, 2013.

The Council has traditionally used the nomination process outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, in combination with Council Rules relating to voice votes, to select the Mayor, but Councilmembers have expressed interest in looking at alternatives to this approach.

The following material describes possible processes for conducting the coming election:

❖ Current process under Robert's Rules (**vote each nominee individually**):
   • The Temporary Chair opens the meeting and calls for nominations.
   • Nominations do not require a second.
   • The Temporary Chair closes the floor to nominations when no further nominations are forthcoming.
   • Nominees are voted **one at a time in the order in which the nominations were presented.** Alternatives for how that vote is taken include:
      o by voice vote and raising of right hand *(traditional City method)*,
      o by roll call vote *(either alphabetically or by position number)*,
      o by paper ballot *(requires pre-planning – see ballot process description later in memo)*.
   • As soon as one of the nominees receives a majority vote, the Temporary Chair declares that person elected and no votes are taken on the remaining nominees.
   • Failure to cast a vote means that your vote will be counted in the affirmative.
   • If the Council fails to select a mayor from the nominees presented, or if there is a tie vote, the Temporary Chair may call a short recess before reopening nominations. This process continues until a nominee receives a majority of the votes.
   • Should the vote continue in a tie, per Council Rules the question may be brought forward again at a subsequent meeting when absent members are present.

   **This method requires that a Councilmember wishing to vote affirmatively for a candidate appearing later in the list of nominees must vote "No" on early nominees to assure that his/her favored nominee comes to a vote.**

❖ <u>Establish temporary Council Rule to allow voting all nominees simultaneously using ballot approach</u>:
- The Temporary Chair opens the meeting and calls for nominations.
- Nominations do not require a second.
- The Temporary Chair closes the floor to nominations when no further nominations are forthcoming.
- The **list of nominees** is voted by paper ballot *(requires pre-planning – see ballot process description below.)*
- If one of the nominees receives a majority vote, the Temporary Chair declares that person elected.
- If the Council fails to select a mayor from the nominees presented, or if there is a tie vote, the Temporary Chair will reopen nominations. The Temporary Chair may call a recess before reopening nominations. This process continues until a nominee receives a majority of the votes.
- Should the vote continue in a tie, per Council Rules the question may be brought forward again at a subsequent meeting when absent members are present.

**Using this method, Councilmembers vote on all nominees simultaneously, making the order in which nominations are taken less significant and could result in fewer rounds of voting.**

This method requires establishing a temporary rule to allow a process other than Robert's Rules to govern the election, which requires a majority vote of all Council (i.e., four votes). Should Council determine that this process is more to your liking, you may direct staff at some future date to amend Council Rules to incorporate it.

❖ <u>Paper ballot process under either scenario</u>:
- In advance of the meeting, the City Clerk will prepare a series of ballots.
- The City Clerk acts as the teller, with assistance from Council Office staff.
- For each round of balloting, the Clerk will distribute fresh ballots to Councilmembers.
- Each Councilmember will initial his/her ballot in the upper right hand corner.
- In the middle of the ballot, each Councilmember will legibly write:
  - **Under Robert's Rules process**, either Aye or No for each nominee who comes to a vote.
  - **Under temporary Council Rule**, the name of his/her preferred candidate from the current list of nominees.
- Staff will collect and count the ballots and provide the Teller's Report to the Temporary Chair. The Temporary Chair will then publicly read the results *(Councilmember X casts his ballot for Councilmember Y, and so on.)*
- Balloting goes on, with new ballots for each round of voting, until a Councilmember receives 4 votes and is elected.

Under either approach, upon election of the Mayor, he or she will assume the gavel and repeat the same steps to elect the Deputy Mayor.

## Council feedback needed:

Council direction will be requested at the December 9 meeting on which election method is preferred. In order to prepare ballots and Teller's Reports, staff will also seek direction on use of paper ballots for the chosen process. Suggested motion language is provided for both options described above.

### Option 1: Robert's Rules method
Move to use the Robert's Rules process for the January 6 election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and using the _____ method of voting.
*(Fill in the blank with one of the following: voice, roll call or ballot method.)*

### Option 2: Temporary Council Rule method
Move to adopt a temporary Council Rule authorizing conducting the January 6, 2014 elections for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor by voting all nominees simultaneously using the ballot approach.